



busworld

NEWSLETTER



An Otokar Kent low floor city bus.



Inside the very modern Mercedes-Benz bus factory in Turkey.



Another view of the Mercedes-Benz factory.



One of 279 BMC Procity low floor buses for Istanbul.

turkey

IS FULL OF CONFIDENCE

Busworld and its local partner in Istanbul, HKF Trade Fairs, are fully occupied with preparations for Busworld Turkey 2012, to be held in Halls 1 and 2 of the Istanbul Expo Center from 19 to 21 April.

In the last edition of Busworld Turkey, in 2010, there were 185 participants of which 145 were local and 40 came from 15 other countries. There were 11,547 professional visitors, including 914 from outside Turkey. This year, with the buoyant Turkish economy, we are

hoping for an even larger and more successful event.

Busworld is in no way a political organisation, but it has to be aware of political and economic trends. The influential "Sunday Times", pub-

lished in London, recently wrote a fascinating article on Turkey. Noting that the economy was forging ahead at 8.2 per cent growth in 2010-11, the article suggested that Turkey is now edging away from Europe to become a regional power.

In the previous decade, Turkey made little progress on its long-standing application for membership of the European Union. Some existing members were opposed to the application but, according to the newspaper, some prominent Turkish people are now asking whether European membership is essential for its future and its survival. They have noted the turmoil in the Eurozone, compared with their own strong economic growth, and are asking whether Turkey needs or wants membership of the EU. Ali Babacan, the Deputy Prime Minister, was recently quoted as saying: "The European countries must put their houses in order. They must carry out reforms."

According to the newspaper, public support for membership of the EU has dropped from 73 per cent to 38 per cent in the last six years. In

that time, Turkey has become a much stronger force in the surrounding region, despite problems in Iran, Iraq and Syria. Strong leadership has made Turkey a powerful force in the region.

Turkey already enjoys customs union with the European Union, meaning that goods can flow in either direction free of any import duties. Modern automotive factories in Turkey are building vehicles which comply fully with European legislation. From 1 January 2012, Turkey will move to Euro 5 emission standards therefore, in automotive terms, it is fully up to speed with the European Union.

There are many interesting measures of Turkey's new found influence and confidence. Just stand in the departure hall at Istanbul's Ataturk Airport and look at the destination

boards. Even the most seasoned traveller will be challenged to recognise all the destinations now served from this very important trading hub.

There is a buzz and confidence about Turkey and its automotive industry which will be there for all to see at Busworld Turkey in April. In little more than forty years, Turkey has built a strong automotive industry, covering a wide range of products. It is fully supported by top-quality suppliers, many of whom will be exhibiting at Busworld Turkey.

The Exhibition Center is close to the Ataturk International Airport for those in a hurry, but the Busworld team strongly recommends that visitors take time to see Istanbul and sample this vibrant city.

MERCEDES-BENZ DOMINATES THE COACH MARKET

The Mercedes-Benz factory at Hosdere, on the outskirts of Istanbul, is one of the largest and most modern facilities in the world for making buses and coaches.

The first stage opened in 1995, but the plant has since been greatly enlarged and can now carry out the complete manufacturing process, from bare metal to finished products. One of the most impressive features is the full immersion anti-corrosion cathaphoretic dip treatment system.



The Travego 15SHD offers enormous luggage capacity.



A Conecto low floor bus in Istanbul's colours.

The factory produces a complete range of products. Mercedes-Benz Türk correctly anticipated that the domestic market would move towards accessible city buses, and therefore can offer the Conecto in solo and articulated layouts. The Intouro is a multi-purpose coach with a relatively low deck height. Next in the range is the Turismo, built in two and three axle versions. Top of the range is the Travego, including a super high deck version which is very popular on express services in Turkey.

There is a very extensive network of express coach services throughout Turkey and into

neighbouring countries. There are frequent departures on the main routes, with passengers paying higher fares for more luxurious vehicles. Mercedes-Benz consistently dominates this important business, with around 65% market share.

The Hosdere factory not only supplies the important Turkish market, but is a major exporter. Coaches are supplied throughout the Middle East and Europe. Conecto buses have been delivered as far afield as Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan. They start their lives with a 4,800km delivery run from Istanbul to the customer!

istanbul

MODERNISES ITS BUS FLEET



There are more than 100 double deck buses running in Istanbul.



Istanbul has Europe's largest Bus Rapid Transit system.

Much of Istanbul is becoming choked by chronic traffic congestion, perhaps not surprising in a city of 18,000,000 people. There is great demand for public transport, but some of the systems are remarkably small for a city of this size.

There are only two heavy rail suburban lines, one on each side of the Bosphorous, with very limited services. There is a metro system on the European side with four lines and one relatively new tram route. Frequent ferries travel across and along the Bosphorous. All other areas of the sprawling city rely on buses which come in all shapes and size.

The most impressive part of the system is the modern Bus Rapid Transit network, using 250 Mercedes-Benz CapaCity articulated buses and 50 VDL Phileas vehicles, some of them

bi-articulated. For large parts of their routes, they run on their own dedicated lanes, which are separated from other traffic on one of the main highways into the city centre. They stop at central island platforms, enabling passengers to go up or down to connect with local buses. The BRT vehicles run very frequently, moving large numbers of passengers per direction per hour.

The largest bus operator is IETT, the 140-year old Istanbul Electricity, Tramway and Tunnel Company. It runs more than 2,700 buses, including the BRT vehicles described above. Many of the other buses in the fleet have been built locally by Mercedes-Benz, but there are still many elderly MAN and Ikarus buses which are overdue for replacement. Some of them will go when a major order for 279 BMC Procity low floor buses is delivered over the coming months. Incidentally, this will be the first contract in Turkey to include repair and maintenance.

Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality is supplementing the IETT services by licensing another 2,000 or so buses to run many more routes. They can easily be identified because they are painted in quite different colours. The

latest, mainly purple, livery was chosen after a popular vote.

Many of the contracted buses are new and accessible, either large full low floor models, or low entry midibuses.

There is also a very intensive network of services operated by minibuses, locally known as *dolmu*. The word is the same as a favourite Turkish dish, meat stuffed into vine leaves. It neatly describes their tendency to be overcrowded! They operate on fixed routes, like shared taxis, and stop whenever hailed by a passenger.

The authorities see them as a major cause of congestion and pollution, and would like to reduce their numbers, replacing them with larger buses. That will be difficult politically, because the minibuses employ large numbers of people. It is therefore likely to be a gradual process. Furthermore, manufacturers like Karsan and Otokar have developed low floor minibuses, so the species is likely to survive for some considerable time.

The new and more accessible buses in Istanbul meet the latest engine emissions, and are therefore very clean. They have a number of features to enhance driver and passenger safety and comfort, which opens up opportunities for suppliers of modern destination equipment, air conditioning, real time information systems, closed circuit television and fire suppression systems, just to give a few examples.

It not just Istanbul where there is investment in new buses. Izmir municipality recently placed an order for 175 new buses with BMC, which has its factory on the outskirts of the city. Ankara continues to buy large numbers of new buses from MAN, which, similarly, has its factory on the outskirts of the capital.



Many of these old Ikarus buses are still in service.



An MAN Lion's City low entry bus for Istanbul.

TEMSA MODERNISES ADANA FACTORY

The last two years have been quite turbulent for Tamsa Global, but the company has come through that period and is now looking much more confident.

Production of the Mitsubishi Canter light truck range was moved out of the factory in Adana to another site near Istanbul.

Tamsa took the opportunity to completely modernise the plant and introduce further efficiencies in their production processes. The

Adana factory has capacity for 2,000 mid-size and 1,250 full size buses and coaches per annum. The latter can be built either in carbon steel, treated with epoxy, or in stainless steel.

Tamer Ünlü, Tamsa's new CEO, previously ran the Toyota factory in Turkey which regularly achieved very high quality standards. Much of that experience has been brought to Adana.

At the same time, the Tamsa range has been extended. The Avenue city bus is available with diesel or CNG engines and has won some significant orders. The mid size MD C9 coach

has been joined by the MD 9DD, a dual-door intercity vehicle, and the MD 9LE low entry midibus. The popular Safari coach family has been extended with a new tri-axle model, the HD14, capable of accommodating up to 63 seats.

Tamsa has supplied the TS35 midicoach to the United States for several years. This is built to an overall length of 35ft (10.67m) and will soon be joined by 40ft and 45ft models. This will make Tamsa the only manufacturer able to supply all three popular coach lengths in the US market.



The new Tamsa MD9 LE low entry midibus.



A Tamsa Avenue bus in the colours of Istanbul.



The new Safari HD14 tri-axle coach.

OTOKAR OFFERS A FULL RANGE

Otokar is one of the most significant manufacturing companies in Turkey. It is a member of the Koç Group and its activities include the manufacture of military vehicles.

Those demanding quality standards are part of the company's culture and are reflected in the construction and specification of the expanding range of buses and coaches.

Otokar first entered the bus market with dolmus vehicles powered by air-cooled Deutz engines. They were followed by midicoaches, around 6-7 metres long. In 2006, the Vectio range was launched, at a length of 9 metres and with a choice of MAN or Deutz engines. The Vectio quickly developed into a range, including a low entry bus, a school bus, and a touring coach with a higher floor.

This was a period of rapid development. At Busworld Kortrijk, in October 2009, Otokar introduced the Kent, a full size city bus. There was a choice of a full low floor layout, or a

higher floor, more suitable for shorter interurban journeys.

Otokar also launched the Centro, a 5.9 metre low entry minibus with a double width door behind the front axle. This is known as the M2010 in Turkey. They are now a familiar sight in Istanbul.

Otokar has ambitious plans to expand its export activities. As part of the effort, Otokar Europe has been established, with headquarters in the Paris region. The company is already selling in several Western European countries and has targeted them for further growth.



The little Otokar M2010 low floor minibus.



The Doruk 220LE is known in other markets as the Vectio.



The Vectio T midicoach has been widely praised for its quality.

FLEMISH TRIALS OF ELECTRIC TRACTION

During Busworld Kortrijk, the Federation of Belgian Bus and Coach Companies (FBAA) held a seminar about Sustainable Mobility. The conference noted that hybrid buses had become a reality but there are still issues with the autonomy and weight of the batteries.

While there have been some developments of buses powered only by batteries, and therefore offering zero emissions, they suffer from insufficient range for a full day's operation and most have had limited passenger capacity.

Hermm Lux of Flanders Drive said that his company was investigating the feasibility, efficiency and application of induction charging to boost their range. The principal of induction charging requires electric current to be pro-



A Van Hool city bus testing the electric induction system.

vided beneath the surface of the road at bus stops and terminals. Whenever a bus stops above the charging unit, it could take a fast boost of current to top up the batteries. By using this system, the range of the bus could be extended to a full day's work.

A test route, 1.2 kilometres long, had been laid out on different road surfaces in Lommel, a town in the province of Limburg. The system was user-friendly and did not cause any visual pollution. The first test results were positive

and showed that inductive charging has a commercial future.

Intensive research was being carried out with regard to the ideal position of the vehicle in order to avoid radiation in the interior and the area around the bus. However, Hermm Lux expected that further progress would be made in 2012, with a pilot project run by the major Flemish operator, De Lijn, before the end of that year.

ISUZU LAUNCHES THE CITIBUS

Anadolu Isuzu has been active in the Turkish market since 1984 and is probably best known for its popular range of midibuses and midicoaches. These are built in a factory which was opened in 1999 near the city of Kocaeli. Since then, the company has developed a substantial export business.



A typical Isuzu Turquoise midicoach.



The new Isuzu low entry Citibus.

More recently, Isuzu has moved into longer and lower city buses, culminating in the launch last November of the stylish Citibus midibus. This low entry model is built to an overall length of 9.515m, a width of 2.41m and a height, including air conditioning, of 3.117m.

The Citibus is powered by a rear-mounted Isuzu Euro 5 – EEV engine with the choice of either an Allison fully automatic gearbox or an automated 6-speed manual Isuzu gearbox. Some of the very first examples were destined for service in Istanbul.

BMC WINS LARGE BUS ORDERS

At the last edition of Busworld Turkey, in March 2010, BMC celebrated its 45th anniversary and production of its 300,000th vehicle. The exhibits on its stand included full low floor Procity buses in solo and articulated versions. BMC can offer either diesel or CNG Cummins engines.



BMC launched its Procity Hybrid bus at Kortrijk in October.



A Probus LE low entry midibus for Istanbul.

In August 2011, BMC won an order from IETT for 279 Procity buses which will be delivered through to the end of 2012. The total deal, valued at the equivalent of EUR66m, included a five year maintenance contract, the first of its kind in Turkey. The buses have a comprehensive specification, including Cummins Euro 5 engines, ZF EcoLife fully automatic gearboxes, air conditioning, CCTV, satellite vehicle tracking and an automatic fire extinguisher system.

BMC chose Busworld Kortrijk in October to launch its Procity Hybrid which featured a Cummins ISB 4.5 litre diesel engine and a Siemens ELFA-2 hybrid drive system. It is now undergoing extensive testing.

BMC has a strong order book for buses and coaches and reckons to be market leader in the full size city bus sector in Turkey.

KARSAN POISED TO EXPAND

Karsan is one of the oldest vehicle manufacturers in Turkey, having started in 1966. In 1998, it became part of the Kiraça Holding, headed by Mr Inan Kiraç. They invested in a new factory in Akçalar, near Bursa, and started manufacturing towards the end of 1999.

Karsan is a fascinating company. It manufactures a wide range of commercial vehicles, some of which are sold under its own name. Others are built on a contract basis for international companies like Citroen, Hyundai and Renault.

For many years, Karsan was a major supplier of minibuses which were seen throughout Turkey on dulmus services. The company has also built a minibus based on the Peugeot J9. In June 2010, at Busworld Russia, Karsan launched the J10, a low floor version of this vehicle.



The low floor Karsan J10 minibus.

In October 2010, Karsan signed an agreement with BredaMenarinibus to produce and sell the Italian company's complete range of buses, not only in Turkey, but also for export markets. These include the Vivacity midibus and the full size Avancity, both available with a choice of diesel or CNG engines.

Recently the Italian press reported that Finmeccanica plans to sell BredaMenarinibus. There has been speculation that Karsan is a potential purchaser, but not to take over any of the manufacturing facility in Italy. Perhaps more will be revealed by the time of Busworld Turkey!



Karsan can build the BredaMenarinibus Avancity, seen here with a CNG engine.

NEWSLETTER ONLINE

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